

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-31 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 11, 17, and 25-28 being the independent claims. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding rejections.

Interview Summary

At the outset, the undersigned would like to express appreciation to Examiner Jamila Williams for her time and attention extended during the interview conducted on October 5, 2005. The subject matter of independent claims 1, 11 and 17 was discussed during the interview in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,094,644 to Kelley ("Kelley"), and claim 11 further in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,616,753 to Marx ("Marx"). Examiner Williams agreed that the proposed amendment of a "solid" object to claims 1, 11 and 17 overcomes the rejection to Kelley, but that further searching may be necessary. An additional proposed amendment to claim 11 to overcome the rejection to Marx was discussed, but no agreement was reached.

In a follow-up telephone call with Examiner Williams on October 17, 2005, an amendment to claim 11 was discussed. Examiner Williams agreed that the proposed amendment would overcome the rejection to Marx.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 4, 5, 9, 12, 19, 23 and 24.

Claim Objection

Claim 17 was objected to for an informality. Specifically, the Examiner stated that the term "the object" lacks antecedent basis. The Applicants have amended claim 17 to correct the informality. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claim 17 be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 10, 11, 14-18, and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,094,644 to Kelley ("Kelley").

Claims 11 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,616,753 to Marx ("Marx").

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite an apparatus including "at least one member disposed in the passage, the member being configured to redirect a movement of a solid object." As discussed during the interview, Kelley does not disclose or teach such an apparatus. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable. Based at least upon their dependence from claim 1, claims 2-10 and new claim 30 are also patentable.

Independent claim 11 has been amended to recite a method including "receiving a solid object at an input aperture defined at a first end of a channel, the channel disposed within a body having a base configured to support the body on a surface, the base being disposed within a plane" and "receiving the object at an output aperture defined at a second end of the channel, the output aperture being in a plane substantially orthogonal to the plane in which the base is disposed." Neither Kelley nor Marx disclose or teach such a method. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 11 is patentable. Based at least upon their dependence from claim 11, claims 12-16 are also patentable.

Independent claim 17 has been amended to recite an apparatus including "an output generator coupled to the actuator and configured to generate an output in response to engagement of the actuator by a solid object." As discussed during the interview, Kelley does not disclose or teach such an apparatus. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 17 is patentable. Based at least upon their dependence from claim 17, claims 18-24 and new claim 31 are also patentable.

New Independent Claims

New independent claim 25 includes the subject matter of claim 5 and previously presented claim 1, which was indicated by the examiner as being allowable. Accordingly, new claim 25 is allowable.

New independent claim 26 includes the subject matter of claim 9 and previously presented claim 1, which was indicated by the Examiner as being allowable. Accordingly, new claim 25 is allowable.

New independent claim 27 includes the subject matter of claim 12 and previously presented claim 11, which was indicated by the Examiner as being allowable. Accordingly, new claim 27 is allowable.

New independent claim 28 includes the subject matter of claim 19 and previously presented claim 17, which was indicated by the Examiner as being allowable. Accordingly, new claim 28 is allowable. Based at least upon its dependence from claim 28, claim 29 is also allowable.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed or rendered moot. The Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections, and that they be withdrawn. The Applicant believes that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that further personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

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Cooley Godward LLP
ATTN: Patent Group
Reston Town Center
11951 Freedom Drive
Reston, VA 20190-5656
Tel: (703) 456-8000
Fax: (703) 456-8100

Respectfully submitted,
COOLEY GODWARD LLP

By:

Nancy A Vashaw
Nancy A Vashaw
Reg. No. 50,501

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